



## Gahanna PD Community Bulletin: March 2022

Members of the Gahanna Community:

With the warming weather ahead, we welcome not just the seasonal renewal ushered in by Spring, but also the renewal of a community-wide focus on traffic safety. Why is such an effort needed and why now? The answer lies in a combination of reasons including a return to pre-pandemic traffic volumes, improving weather conditions, and other factors that have contributed to a resurgence in dangerous driving behaviors. To illustrate, through the third week of March there have been over 200 fatalities on Ohio's roadways. Indeed, impaired driving, excessive speed, reckless operation, and distracted driving all pose serious threats to public and roadway safety.

To draw attention to the latter, April is national Distracted Driving Awareness Month. According to the National Safety Council our nation's roads are the most dangerous they've been in years, with 8 lives lost and hundreds more injured on a typical day due to distraction-affected crashes. As part of our participation in this safety campaign, the Gahanna Division of Police will be promoting driver education through our social media platforms, the deployment of electronic messaging boards, and other forums to spread the word about distracted driving.

For those who would ignore the call to drive responsibly or reject our community's outreach efforts, high-visibly enforcement initiatives currently underway will continue throughout April and beyond. Along with our public safety partners, the Division's officers will be ramping up their enforcement efforts to make sure drivers are focused on the road ahead and avoid becoming the next statistic. With the recent introduction of additional statutory penalties, Ohio drivers charged with a variety of offenses involving distraction, like texting while driving, can face an additional fine of up to \$100. More simply put, "U Drive. U Text. U Pay."

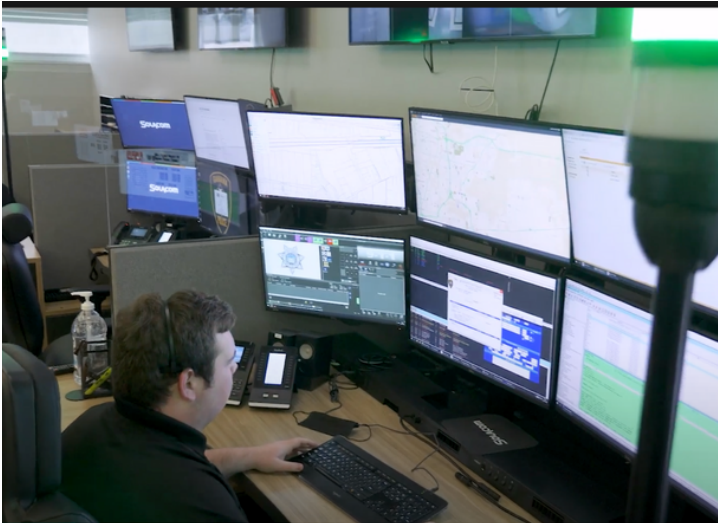
Remember - no phone call, text message, Tweet, Snapchat, social media post, or other use of an electronic device while driving is worth a life lost. So this April, take a personal pledge to keep your eyes on the road and together let's put an end to distracted driving.

**Jeff Spence**  
*Chief of Police*

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## Summary of Division Activity for February



### Support Services – Communications Center:

Dispatchers handled 811 9-1-1 calls throughout the month. 9-1-1 calls received by the Communications Center were answered in an average of 3.5 seconds. No text-to-911 messages were received.

73% of all 9-1-1 calls received by the Communications Center originated from cellular phones while 13% were received from VOIP (Voice over Internet Protocol) telephone lines/systems.

An additional 2,085 calls were received through the Division's non-emergency lines in February.

2,687 calls for service were dispatched during the month.

## Summary of Division Activity for January

**1770**

2022 Year-to-Date  
Total 9-1-1 Calls

**1445**

2021 Year-to-Date  
Total 9-1-1 Calls

**22.49%**

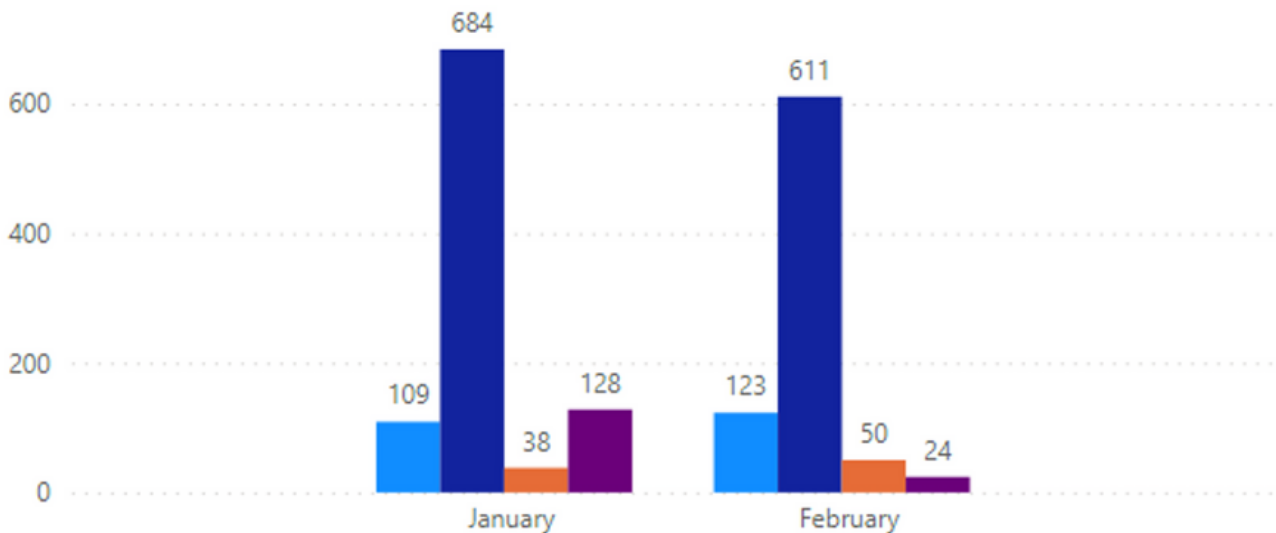
% Change  
Year-to-Date Total  
9-1-1 Calls

### Gahanna 9-1-1 System Data

Month	9-1-1 Total	9-1-1 Wireless	9-1-1 Wireline	9-1-1 VoIP	No ANI/ALI	Average Answer Delay (Seconds)	Abandoned Calls	Rollover Calls	Non-Emergency Lines	Text to 9-1-1
January	959	684	38	109	128	4.00	28	0	1948	0
February	811	611	50	123	24	3.00	32	0	2085	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>1770</b>	<b>1295</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>232</b>	<b>152</b>	<b>3.50</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4033</b>	<b>0</b>

### Total 9-1-1 Calls by Month & Type

● 9-1-1 VoIP ● 9-1-1 Wireless ● 9-1-1 Wireline ● No ANI/ALI



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## Field Services: February 2022

- 313 offense and arrest reports were generated including a summary of the following incidents by type:
  - No robberies occurred; a juvenile was charged in a 2021 robbery following the return of latent fingerprint evidence.
  - Nine theft from vehicles were reported in February.
  - Eight incidents of criminal damaging were reported.
  - Four burglaries were reported.
  - Two Breaking & Entering offenses were reported during the month.
  - 17 vehicles were reported stolen. All the stolen vehicles were either Kia or Hyundai models. Juveniles and young adults are believed to be the suspects in nearly all the incidents.
  - Incidents of assaults (no domestic nexus) are as follows:
    - No aggravated assaults.
    - Seven simple assaults; one arrest.
  - Domestic-related responses include:
    - 13 documented disputes that did not involve a criminal offense.
    - Two arrests for Domestic Violence; two warrants issued.
    - Two offense reports were forwarded for investigation or further prosecutorial review.
  - Drug offenses for the month include:
    - Drug/Narcotics violations – two offense reports; one arrest.
    - Drug equipment violations – none.
    - One overdose occurred in February resulting in a fatality. Prescription opiate medication is believed to be the cause in this case.
- 17 arrest warrant entries were made during the month.

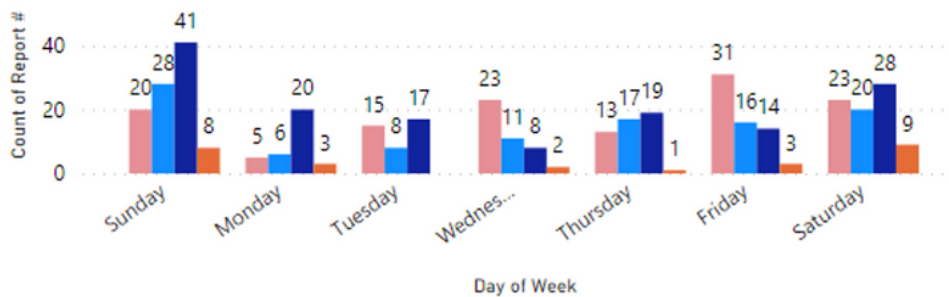
## Field Services: February 2022 (page 2)

- Officers conducted 521 self-initiated traffic stops with 224 traffic violators issued citations; 14 arrests were made from the stops.
- The Division responded to 37 motor vehicle crashes with a further breakdown as follows:
  - No traffic fatalities occurred during the month.
  - No crashes were classified as serious injury suspected.
  - One crash was classified as minor injury suspected – 2.7% of crash responses.
  - Five were classified as injury possible – 13.5% of responses.
  - The remaining 31 crashes were classified as Property Damage Only (PDO) – 83.8% of responses.
  - Five crashes occurred on IR-270 – 13.5% of all crash responses in Gahanna.
  - Two incidents involved alcohol and/or drug impairment – 5.4% of responses.
  - One commercial vehicle crash occurred during the month – 2.7% of crash responses involved a commercial motor vehicle.
  - Distractions were reported in nine of the 37 crashes.
- Patrol officers made 17 arrests for impaired driving (OVI).
  - Six arrestees refused to submit to chemical testing.
  - The results of blood/urine tests in seven incidents are pending laboratory analysis.
  - The average blood alcohol content for the four arrestees that submitted to breath testing was .17 or over two times the legal limit of intoxication in Ohio.
  - The period between Friday evening into Sunday morning resulted in the highest number of arrests.

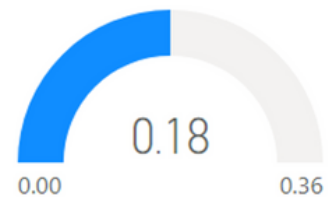
## Summary of Division Activity for February 2022

### Arrests by Day of Week

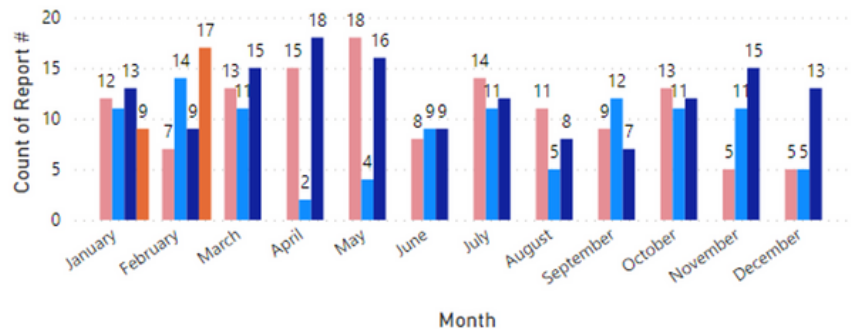
Year ● 2019 ● 2020 ● 2021 ● 2022



### Average BAC



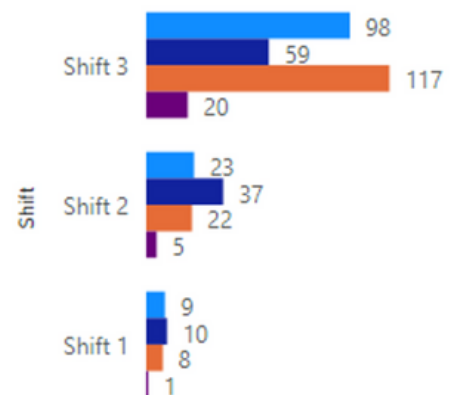
Year ● 2019 ● 2020 ● 2021 ● 2022



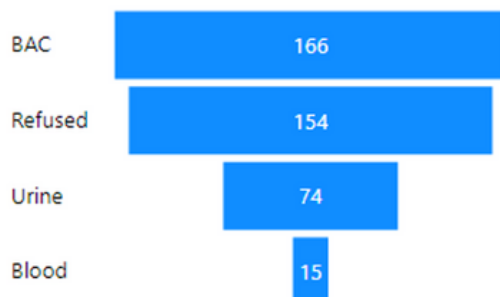
### OVI by Year and Shift

### OVI by Year and Shift

Year ● 2019 ● 2020 ● 2021 ● 2022



### Testing Type Total



Count of Report #

## Investigative Services



- The Division's detectives were assigned 121 offense and arrest reports requiring investigative follow-up or other administrative action.
- Detectives obtained 19 investigative subpoenas and executed six search warrants during the month.

## Search Continues for Missing Teen

The search for Ali Faisal Shegow, age 17, of Columbus continues along the Big Walnut Creek. Shegow was last seen late in the evening hours of Monday, February 21st in the creek near Knob Hill Drive. A friend of Shegow's observed him remove his clothing and enter the fast-moving water. Shegow's adult friend was unable to grab Shegow before he lost sight on him in the dark, high water of the creek.

Over the last several weeks, search efforts have been underway involving several law enforcement and fire services. Divers equipped with sonar, aircraft, aerial drones equipped with infrared cameras and search & rescue personnel on foot and in watercraft have conducted extensive searches of the Big Walnut Creek from the point Shegow was last observed entering the water.

Detectives have conducted several follow-up investigations with family members, friends and individuals claiming to have seen Shegow in the days following his disappearance. To date, none of the investigative efforts have led to any credible leads.

Search, recovery, and investigative operations will continue in this case which is led by the Columbus Division of Police.



## Kia and Hyundai Models Targeted by Thieves

During the month of February, 17 vehicles were reported stolen in Gahanna. All the involved vehicles were either Kia or Hyundai models. The suspects in these thefts are juveniles or young adults and several arrests have been made. The uptick in thefts involving Kia and Hyundai models is a nationwide trend and due in part to a recently removed YouTube video detailing how the vehicles can be accessed by bypassing the security system and starting the ignition without a key. Many of the vehicles reported stolen have been subsequently recovered, but most sustained some sort of damage (broken windows, crash damage, etc.).

The most visible and effective deterrent to counter would-be car thieves is the use of a steering wheel lock (the Club or similar device).

In 2022, Kia began installing an engine immobilization device as a standard feature in all their vehicles. More information on this local trend can be found in [THIS ARTICLE](#).



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## Severe Weather Awareness



March 20-26 was Severe Weather Awareness Week. The purpose of Severe Weather Awareness Week is to draw attention to the need for residents to focus on three key areas of preparedness for any hazard: Build a Kit, Make a Plan and Stay Informed.

Central Ohio faces risks from many natural and man-made hazards. Since this is the time of year we may see an increase in tornadic activity we will focus on high winds and tornadoes.

Are You Ready for High Winds or Tornadoes? Would you know how to protect yourself and others from destructive high winds or a tornado?

[ReadyOhio](#) encourages everyone, young and old, to learn what to do to prepare for and recover from all hazards, including tornadoes.

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## Severe Weather Awareness

### **Stay Aware (know the terms)**

**A tornado watch** means the potential or conditions exist for a tornado to develop. Prepare to move to shelter in the lowest level of a sturdy building. Listen to a NOAA Weather Radio or a local television or radio station for up-to-date weather information, including the development of tornado warnings.

**A tornado warning** means a tornado or funnel cloud has been spotted or is about to happen in or near your area. Take immediate action to seek safe shelter. Continue to listen to a NOAA Weather Radio or a local television or radio station for up-to-date weather information. Stay sheltered until the tornado warning has expired for your area.

**Tornado Siren Zones** of the Franklin County Warning Siren System may be activated by geographical zones (NW, NE, SW, and SE) when a tornado warning is issued in Franklin County. These four zones allow siren activations to more closely align the warnings with the direction of travel of the severe weather or the actual location of tornadic activity as issued by the National Weather Service in Franklin County.

### **Make a Plan**

**Prepare a home tornado plan.** Pick an uncluttered place in your home that is on the lowest level with no windows. The safest place is in the basement under a staircase. In the event of a tornado warning in your area, your family should know where to go in order to stay safe. If you are outside or in a mobile home, find immediate shelter in a nearby sturdy building.

### **Build a Kit**

Make a kit. Include a flashlight, portable radio, extra batteries, first aid kit, bottled water (at least one gallon per person per day for at least three days), nonperishable food, manual can opener, blankets or sleeping bags, protective clothing. The ReadyOhio website has a complete disaster supplies kit checklist.

**Protect your home against high winds.** Remove diseased or damaged limbs from trees. Move or secure lawn furniture, trash cans and anything else that could become a missile-like object if picked up by strong winds or a tornado.

**Consult with professionals about a "safe room".** If you are building a new home or remodeling, ask about having a structurally reinforced space constructed for your family's protection during a tornado or high winds.

You can access additional information on preparedness [HERE](#).

## Tax Season Scam Alert

Fraud and scams have always been around but have become more prevalent over the past couple of years. Fraudsters are looking for the easiest ways to make money and are capitalizing on any personal identifying information that they can get their hands on. Investigators see a large number of identity theft reports each month, especially around tax season.



Avoid anyone that is claiming they are from the IRS or other government agencies when they are asking for your personal information to charge you fake fees, as an offer for you to get you more money. Fraudsters are also attempting to get your bank account information by calling and pretending to be a representative from your banking institute and claiming that your account is in danger. Avoid this trap by telling them you will have to call back, hang up and call the phone number that you know belongs to your banking institute and verify that your account has not been compromised. Checking bank accounts regularly is another way to stay on top of your finances. If anything appears off, contact your bank, and file a police report when there is confirmed fraud on your account. Additionally, filing your taxes as early as possible helps to prevent someone from using your identity to fraudulently file and receive your return.

## Help Needed to Identify Crime Suspects

On Friday, February 18th, the suspect captured in the surveillance camera image (right) attempted to use a credit card at a Target store (1892 N. High Street, Columbus) that had been stolen from a vehicle earlier in the day that was parked in front of Planet Fitness in the Hunter's Ridge shopping complex (340 S. Hamilton Road).



**In-store surveillance image**


On Wednesday, March 16th, the two men captured on in-store surveillance cameras (right) stole \$200 worth of merchandise from the United Dairy Farmers location at 180 West Johnstown Road.



**In-store surveillance image**

Should you recognize the suspects or have any information regarding these incidents, please contact the Division's detectives at 614-342-4240. Callers may remain anonymous.

## State of the City



# 2022 STATE OF THE CITY

State of the City was held on March 24, 2022 at The Peak at Edison. Many local organizations and restaurants were on hand to share information and provide samplings of culinary treats. Thank everyone who attended! If you missed it - a video recap will be available soon on [Gahanna.gov](http://Gahanna.gov).



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Thank you!

GAHANNA DIVISION OF POLICE  
*"To Serve and Protect"*



"The Mission of the Gahanna Division of Police is to serve and protect our diverse community by building partnerships in order to provide professional law enforcement services that safeguard the lives, rights, and property of all."

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